

ENCOURAGING READING

QUESTION: How can I encourage my child to spend more time reading?

ANSWER: Reading is the most important skill that a child will learn, and this skill begins in the home. The foundation for learning to read is established through language and knowledge developed in the home. The emphasis on reading will continue when parents encourage children to read for enjoyment, enrichment, and personal fulfillment. As a parent, you can encourage your child to read in the following ways.

- * Set the example. Let your child know that you think reading is important by reading yourself.
- * Make books available in the home. When reading materials are readily available, children are more likely to read.
- * Visit the library. Encourage your child to browse and talk to the librarian about good books.
- * Listen to your child read. Make the time to sit down with your child.
- * Encourage your child to set up his/her own reading library. Purchase books through book clubs, stores, and schools, and trade them with friends.
- * Make sure your child has a quiet place to read in the home.
- * Turn off the T.V. When T.V. time is limited a child will turn to books for entertainment.
- * Teach your child to scan books. By looking at the inside cover, back cover, or first few pages he/she can usually tell if a book will be interesting.
- * Allow your child to choose his/her own books. The independence of making personal choices will be an encouragement in itself.
- * Read the newspaper together. Find things of interest to share with your child.
- * Provide the time for reading. Do not schedule so many activities that there is no time for reading.
- * Emphasize reading for knowledge. When your child shows an interest in a subject, help him/her find books on the topic.
- * Allow your child to go through stages in reading. Reading all horse stories, comic books, or easy reading books is better than no reading at all.
- * Do not compare your child with other children who may be better readers.
- * Give books as gifts. Make reading special to your child.